

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

Girolamo Savonarola on the one hand, and, on the other, in the mystical sacrifice of those women, clad in the habit she had worn and bearing the same marks of Christ's passion on their members, Lucia of Narni, Osanna of Mantua, Colomba of Rieti, who attempted to imitate her work among the corrupt courts of the Renaissance. Ostensibly, Catherine's labour had failed. A century after her death, the state of her beloved Italy was more deplorable than when she had departed from it, the Papacy immeasurably more corrupt than it had been in the darkest days of the Schism, and a far greater division and more permanent in the Church was about to open. But the true value of the work to which the whole power of a human soul has been dedicated, cannot, any more than the lasting result of any great or small religious movement, thus be measured, for, by its very nature, it is not manifested in outward and visible effects; its most perfect flowers and fruits throughout the ages are in the invisible garden of the spirit, grown to be gathered only by Him who feedeth among the lilies.